

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to methods of searching and querying computers and websites connected to a distributed network such as the Internet. When the computers and websites are uniquely identified by an IP address or similar identifier, the processes of the present invention systematically proceed through a given range of addresses to be queried in a top-to-bottom manner. The process preferably comprises four stages: the Initial Process, the Second Pass, the Ping Process, and the Ping Follow-Up. Essentially, the Initial Process establishes a preliminary listing of computers that respond to requests transmitted over the network. The Second Pass attempts to establish a connection to computers with which a connection could not be established during the Initial Process. The Ping Process uses ping commands to verify the operability of non-responsive computers; and the Ping Follow-Up makes one final attempt to transmit requests to computers that have responded to ping commands. Output files may be generated, based upon responses to the requests, that may be used in subsequent processes such as filtering Internet websites for content.

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